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ABSTRACT

A total reading program must provide for the sequential development of reading skills and the deliberate development of interest in reading. The prime means of accomplishing the goals of skills and interest in reading is use of a basal reading program along with independent reading. The basal reader is designed to provide for the sequential development of essential reading skills, and a good independent reading program is needed to provide for varied and appealing application of these skills. The independent reading time can be an important time in which to open the world of art. A student can be transported to a different time and world by reading books on art history and art appreciation. An excellent book to introduce students to the wonderful world of art is H. W. Janson and D. J. Janson's "The Story of Painting." (Eighteen references are attached.) (RS)

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Using Reading Skills To Open The World of Art

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USING READING SKILLS TO OPEN THE WORLD OF ART

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> If the words remain words and sit quietly on the page; if they remain nouns, and verbs and adjectives, then we are truly blind. But if the words seem to disappear and our innermost self begins to laugh and cry, to sing and dance, and finally to fly---if we are transported in all that we are, to a brand new world, then---only then---can we say that we can READ! (Wayman, 1980, p. 1).

A total reading program must provide for two major goals:

1. The sequential development of reading skills.
2. The deliberate development of interest in reading.

We must along with teaching the basic reading skills develop in the student a desire to apply those skills in reading which is enjoyable, profitable, and frequent.

It is hard to say how much success of a good reader is based on skill and how much on interest. The prime means for accomplishing the goals of skills and interest in reading are that the basal reader is designed to provide for the sequential development of essential reading skills, and a good independent reading program is needed to provide for varied and appealing application of these skills. The importance of good independent reading is so the students will become vitally interested inn continued reading.

The primary purpose of independent reading is to develop a love of reading but it also should complement the skills program. The essentials of an effective independent reading program should include:

1. An interested teacher.
2. Good library books for independent reading.
3. Frequent opportunity to use independent reading.

The teacher must have an interest in reading and share this enjoyment with their students.

Books must be readily available and should be available in the classroom as well as in the school library. The books should be accessible and used by the students, none should gather dust on the shelf.

Independent reading is essential and often overlooked. Independent reading can give an opportunity for discussion, analyzing, comparing, sharing, and otherwise deepen the enjoyment of the reading. The teacher should not require book reports or check to see if the student has read every word.

Many children who have difficulty with reading have some artistic ability and interest. If we capitalize on a student's strengths, learning to read through the arts will draw on their strengths or at least not on areas of failure.

The independent reading time can be an important time in which to open the world of art. A student can be transported to a different time and world by reading books on art history and art appreciation. An excellent book to introduce students to the wonderful world of art is <u>The Story of Painting</u> by Janson. <u>The</u>

World of Art reading comprehension series lets the students read about an artist, some of their works, and then asks them to answer questions on what they have read.

Books like Painting: How to Look at Great Art by Campbell, help the student see things that they have never seen before. Through reading and looking, the student can gain a new enjoyment for the paintings and in looking at them again and again, find new enjoyment.

In books about artists and their lives, the student gets the opportunity to look into the life of the artist and understand him/her and some of his/her painting a little better. The books that are written for children introduce them in a way that is understandable to their age level.

The book, Talking to the Sun, by Koch and Farrell (1985), is a treasury of poems accompanied by works of art to increase a young reader's enjoyment and understanding of the poems.

Linnea in Monet's Garden, by Bjork and Anderson (1987), combines the story of Linnea visiting Monet's garden with photographs of many of Monet's famous paintings and old family snap shots. The student is transported to a different time and place.

Books like The Grand Island of Jatte by Leonard (1978), introduce the reader to the famous painting by Seruat. The author tells a story of what different people in the painting might be saying. The reader becomes a part of the painting and looks at this work of art in an entirely different light.

How to draw books not only opens up a world of drawing but

also thinking and reading skills. In these books, information is given along with what the student is to draw. This also can be used to build a student's concepts and vocabulary. Another often difficult-to-master reading skill is reading to follow directions. In this type of book, following directions is constant and challenging but a "do-able" task. The directions are accompanied by simple pictures and the words and language are relatively easy to read.

Picture books are a great source of enjoyment to children of all ages. They have something of a universal value and are missed by many children. They can be used to entice reluctant readers, non-readers, and poor readers. Picture books can stimulate interesting classroom projects and may increase the popularity of the written word for children who fear and distrust.

In an article by Giff, Belden, and Rossi (1985), Martha Belden used picture books to help second-graders develop healthier self-concepts. Four areas that Ms. Belden stressed were: (1) developing an awareness of one's body; (2) learning to cope with problems and changes; (3) developing a sense of achievement; and (4) being content with who one is. These books can be a springboard for role-playing experiences, teacher-led discussions, and encouraging creative extenders.

> When language barriers make words an insufficient means of communication, art serves as the universal language. If, as a teacher, you're having difficulty explaining a concept, draw a picture. If a child is unable to explain something

to you, ask him to draw a picture. Among children of varied nationalities, art can always be depended upon to carry the message (Linderman, 1984, p. 75).

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